

NCDOT Division Seven Project Solicitation and Ranking Process Prioritization 3.0



Introduction

The NCDOT Division Engineers are required by STI legislation to develop a local input methodology for all transportation projects (highway, bike and pedestrian, public transportation, aviation, rail and ferry) within their respective areas that may compete for state funding. In conjunction with our continuous, cooperative and comprehensive planning relationship with local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs), the NCDOT Division Seven Engineer has developed the following project solicitation process and local input methodology.

Applicability

The project solicitation process will apply to all projects submitted by the Division Engineer, and the local input methodology will apply to all projects (regional impact and division needs) to be ranked by the Division Engineer within their geographic boundaries (and adjacent boundaries if a given project spans more than one Division).

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Schedule Details

Project Solicitation:

Each transportation Division will solicit candidate projects for 30 days prior to the project submittal deadline. The results of this process will be reviewed with each of the MPOs and RPOs in the Division, appropriate NCDOT Transit Division (all modes) staff, and local aviation, rail and public transit operators prior to submitting new candidate projects. Project suggestions received will be shared and coordinated with the respective MPO and/or RPO in each Division and with appropriate NCDOT transit division staff to avoid duplication and ensure maximum number of project submittals per Division is not exceeded. The Division will then submit the selected project list using NCDOT's SPOT On!line tool (web based system) for quantitative scoring no later than the project submittal deadline.

Project Ranking:

The Division Seven Engineer will evaluate the full list of new and previously evaluated projects for the Division between June and August 2014 using this methodology and assigning local input points in consultation with the MPOs and RPOs in the division, and appropriate NCDOT Transit Division (all modes) staff for submission to the Strategic Prioritization Office of Transportation (SPOT) by August 29th, 2014.

Public Input Process

Project Solicitation:

Division Engineer's office announced a 30 day project solicitation period to all governments, MPOs, RPOs, NCDOT staff, local airport, rail and transit operators, and interested persons in the Division's geographic boundaries using methods approved by the NCDOT Communications Office. The Division hosted a public hearing at the Division Office during the 30 day project solicitation period. Information regarding the public hearing and specific methods for providing input (email, phone, mail, etc.) were advertised to stakeholders using methods approved by the NCDOT Communications Office. Comments received via the public hearing and other methods approved by the NCDOT Communications Office were posted to the NCDOT website. **The results of the 30 day project solicitation period and the public input received were reviewed by the Division Engineer in consultation with the MPOs and RPOs in the Division, appropriate NCDOT transit division staff, and local aviation, rail and transit operators.** Through this collaboration, the Division Engineer determined the list of candidate projects submitted for technical evaluation, while avoiding duplicate project submissions and ensuring the maximum number of project submittals was not exceeded. The Division Engineer was also able to submit new transportation projects (across all modes) based upon the P3.0 Workgroup and Department's agreed upon allowances.

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Project Ranking:

The Division Engineer will receive the quantitative scores for the projects eligible for local input points in May of 2014. The Division Engineer will be responsible for assigning local input points to regional impact and division needs projects for their area (statewide mobility projects will be evaluated based solely on their technical scores). The Division Engineer will publish his/her local input methodology which will be used as the basis to assign preliminary points to all regional impact and division needs projects within their division and/or adjacent divisions using methods approved by the NCDOT Communications Office. Each Division Engineer's office will then announce a 30 day comment period to solicit input on this information and the preliminary local input point assignments and provide specific methods for providing input (email, phone, mail, etc.) as approved by the NCDOT Communications Office. The 30 day comment period will vary by Division, and will take place during the 90 day window (June 2nd – August 29th, 2014) for assigning local input points. During this period, each Division will host public drop-in/workshop sessions at a central location within each Division prior to the final assignment of local input points by August 29, 2014. Advertisement soliciting input during the 30 day comment period and for the drop-in/workshop sessions will be made to the public and to MPOs, RPOs, NCDOT staff, local airport, rail and transit operators, and interested persons in the Division's geographic boundaries using methods approved by the NCDOT Communications Office.

The Division Engineer will review comments received in accordance with his local input methodology and in consultation with the MPOs and RPOs in the Division, appropriate NCDOT Transit Division (all modes) staff, and local aviation, rail and transit operators. **Through this evaluation and collaboration, the Division Engineer will determine the final local input point assignments per eligible regional impact and division needs project within their division and/or to projects in adjacent divisions to submit for final evaluation.** All final point assignments will be published using methods approved by the NCDOT Communications Office.

Ranking Process

Introduction:

The first step consists of using the criteria outlined below that will be used to create a ranking of projects in the regional impact and division needs categories that will be used by the Division Engineer in determining preliminary and final local input point assignments for projects within their division and/or to projects in adjacent divisions. **The Department's quantitative scores for projects and this ranking process will act as a guide and first step in determining a preliminary rank-ordered list of projects.**

The second step is to apply the Division Methodology to all projects in the preliminary rank-ordered list of projects. This application may reorder the ranking of the projects. The third step is to apply qualitative points to specific projects according to the methodology outlined later.

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Below is the standardized list of criteria used in developing a set of ranking criteria for Division Seven. The combination of criteria selected for the regional impact and division needs ranking processes is most reflective of the needs and priorities for Division Seven. For each criterion selected, a detailed description is provided (including any pertinent information regarding data sets to be used). In developing the list of criteria for Division Seven, a minimum of four criteria were chosen from the standardized list and the weight for each criteria is such that the total possible points for a given project is equal to 100. The Division Engineer will publish their specific set of criteria using methods approved by the NCDOT Communications Office prior to/in conjunction with posting preliminary point assignments for projects within their division and/or to projects in adjacent divisions.

Standard Criteria – Descriptions:

- **Existing Congestion:** a measure of the volume/capacity ratio of a facility or transit service taken from SPOT data.
- **Safety Score:** a calculation based on the crash frequency and severity along sections of a particular roadway. The safety score is the score generated in the quantitative scoring process and is calculated in accordance with the SPOT calculation detailed in appendix 1 of this document.
- **Corridor Continuity:** a measure of the project completing or continuing improvements on a defined transportation corridor.
- **Multimodal Accommodations:** a yes or no measure of the incorporation of pedestrian, bicycle or transit elements into a project.
- **Serves Activity Center(s):** a yes or no measure of the project serving a large employment center, trauma center, institution of higher learning, tourist center or other high traffic facility/site.

Regional Impact Ranking:

Certain highway, aviation, ferry, transit, and rail projects are scored at the regional impact level, as well as any projects that cascade into the regional impact category from the statewide mobility category.

Below is a standard ranking of criteria eligible for use by Division Engineer in evaluating projects in the regional impact category. The Division Engineer has determined the combination of criteria and criteria weights that best reflect the needs and priorities of his area and the specific criteria and weights for the Division are noted below. The resulting scores and rank order will be used by the Division Engineer in developing preliminary and final local input point assignments for projects within the Division and/or to projects in adjacent divisions. The Department's quantitative scores for projects and the Division's ranking process will act as a guide and first step in determining a preliminary rank-ordered list of projects located in the Division and Region of which the Division is a part. Division Engineer will use the preliminary

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rank- ordered list of projects along with local knowledge as well as information gathered through collaboration and consultation with MPOs, RPOs, local airport, rail and transit operators and input from other interested stakeholders to determine the actual assignment of qualitative points.

The following criteria and weights will be used for scoring projects in the regional impact tier:

Existing Congestion 30%

Safety 25%

Corridor Continuity 20%

Serves Activity Center 25%

Regional Impact Standard Ranking – Criteria and Weights <i>(Note: Total points for any given project cannot exceed 100)</i>					
Criteria	0 Points	7.5 Points	15 Points	22.5 Points	30 Points
Existing Congestion 30 (% weight)	Volume to capacity less than 0.5	Volume to capacity between 0.51 and 0.75	Volume to capacity between 0.76 and 0.9	Volume to capacity between 0.91 and 1.0	Volume to Capacity over 1.0
Criteria	0 Points	8.33 Points	16.67 Points	25 Points	
Safety Score 25 (% weight)	SPOT safety points less than 30	SPOT safety points between 31-50	SPOT safety points between 51-65	SPOT safety points greater than 66	
Criteria	0 Points	20 Points			
Corridor Continuity 20 (% weight)	Project does not complete or continue corridor improvement	Project does continue corridor improvement			
Criteria	0 Points	12.5 Points	25 Points		
Serves Activity Center 25 (% weight)	Serves employment centers of fewer than 500 employees, trauma centers, institutions of higher learning, or tourist centers	Project adds new capacity to serve employment centers of 500 to 1500 employees, trauma centers, institutions of higher learning or tourist centers	Project adds significant new capacity to serve employee centers with more than 1500 employees, trauma centers, institutions of higher learning or tourist centers		

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Division Needs Ranking:

Certain highway, aviation, bicycle and pedestrian, ferry, transit, and rail projects are scored at the division needs level, as well as any projects that cascade into the division needs category from the statewide and regional impact category. Division Engineer will use the criteria and weighting below to generate a score for each project and a ranking of all projects in the division needs category.

Below is a standard ranking of criteria eligible for use by Division Engineer in evaluating projects in the division needs category. The Division Engineer has determined the combination of criteria and criteria weights that best reflect the needs and priorities of his area and the specific criteria and weights for the Division are noted below. The resulting scores and rank order will be used by the Division Engineer in developing preliminary and final local input point assignments for projects within their division, to projects in their region with Division 9, and to projects with ties to adjacent divisions, Divisions 5 and 8. The Department's quantitative scores for projects and this ranking process will act as a guide and first step in determining a preliminary rank-ordered list of projects. Each Division Engineer will use the preliminary rank-ordered list of projects along with local knowledge as well as information gathered through collaboration, cooperation, and consultation with MPOs, RPOs, local airport, rail and transit operators and input from other interested stakeholders to determine the final assignment of qualitative points.

The following criteria and weights will be used for scoring projects in the division needs tier:

Existing Congestion 35%

Safety 30%

Serves Activity Center 25%

Multimodal Accommodations 10%

Division Needs Standard Ranking – Criteria and Weights					
<i>(Note: Total points for any given project cannot exceed 100)</i>					
Criteria	0 Points	8.25 Points	17.5 Points	25.25 Points	35 Points
Existing Congestion 35 (% weight)	Volume to capacity less than 0.3	Volume to capacity between 0.30 and 0.49	Volume to capacity between 0.50 and 0.69	Volume to capacity between 0.70 and 1.0	Volume to Capacity Over 1.0
Criteria	0 Points	7.5 Points	15 Points	22.5 Points	30 Points
Safety Score 30 (% weight)	Spot safety points less than 30	Spot safety points between 31 and 50	Spot safety points between 51 and 65	Spot safety points between 66 and 80	Spot safety points greater than 80

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Criteria	0 Points	12.5 Points	25 Points		
Serves Activity Center 25 (% weight)	Serves employment centers of fewer than 500 employees, trauma centers, institutions of higher learning, or tourist centers	Project adds new capacity to serve employment centers of greater than 500 to 1500 employees, trauma centers, institutions of higher learning or tourist centers	Project adds significant new capacity to serve employee centers with more than 1500 employees, trauma centers, institutions of higher learning or tourist centers		
Criteria	0 Points	10 Points			
Multimodal Accommodations 10 (% weight)	Project does not include bike/ped/transit facilities	Project includes bike/ped/transit facilities			

Applying Local Qualitative Points:

The result of the application of the ranking methodology will be a list of projects in priority order. The next step is to assign the Division's qualitative points to specific projects. Division Seven has 2500 points to allocate among Regional projects and 2500 points to allocate among Division projects.

The Division will assign its 2,500 Regional points among modes and project types according to the following target allocation:

- 2,000 points will be allocated to Highway Projects
- Remaining 500 points could be assigned to any mode and project type

The Division will assign its 2,500 Division points among modes and project types according to the following target allocation:

- 2,000 points will be allocated to Highway Projects
- Remaining 500 points will be allocated to any mode and project type.

The Division will assign points within each mode and project type in order of the rankings from above. However exceptions may be made if the project costs more than the funding available in that category, or if the project will not be competitive within the specific category even with the application of qualitative points, or if the project will remain competitive in the absence of assigning qualitative points. Since funding in the Division category is limited, Statewide or

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Regional projects that cascade down to the Division level may not be considered for Division qualitative points if the project costs are excessive. The Division's intent is to allocate points at a ratio of highway to non-highway modes of 80/20 to provide a larger pool of non-highway projects to be programmed under the Normalization Approach Methodology 90/10 to 96/4 ratio range recommendations.

Distribution of the unassigned points in the Regional and Division categories will be determined by:

- the number of eligible projects within each level and mode;
- the likelihood of receiving funding through STI considering the amount of funding available within each Division and/or Region;
- limitations set by the STI legislation; and
- geographic and jurisdictional balance.

The specific reasoning behind the allocation of qualitative points will be documented by Division Seven and posted to NCDOT's website.

During the period that the draft point assignment is released for public comment, Division Seven may make further adjustments to the qualitative point assignment recommendation based on the above factors as well as:

- coordination with GUAMPO, DCHC-MPO, BGMPO, HPMPO, TARPO, and PTRPO as well as their respective member governments on the assignment of points;
- and public input and support as evidenced through public comments submitted to NCDOT, Division Seven's public workshops, public involvement efforts of local governments, and local referenda.

Approval of Ranking Points:

Division Seven will release the draft Project Priority Ranking and application of qualitative points for public comments and hold two public meetings within the 90 day public comment period between June and August 2014. After review and public comment, Division Seven will finalize the application of qualitative points based upon:

- the number of eligible projects within the Division within each funding mode /project type/category;
- the likelihood of receiving funding through STI considering the amount of funding available within each Division or Region, historical funding levels for the mode, and the normalization limitations that have been adopted;
- the effect that receiving funding for a project may have on the likelihood of other projects being funded in the Division or Region considering the limitations set by the STI legislation;
- geographic and jurisdictional balance;

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- coordination with GUAMPO, DCHC-MPO, BGMPO, HPMPO, TARPO, and PTRPO on the assignment of points;
- public input and support as evidenced through public comments submitted to NCDOT, Division Seven's public meetings, public involvement efforts of local governments, and local referenda; and
- Division Engineer's knowledge of the transportation needs of their Division.

If the Division varies from the recommended allocation of qualitative points, we will document the rationale and will post on NCDOT's website.

STI will allow us to use our existing resources more efficiently and effectively and help us move forward with important projects that will enhance mobility and revitalize communities throughout the state. The new process encourages us to think from a statewide and regional perspective while also providing flexibility to address local needs.

With this in mind, it is important now more than ever to coordinate with all of the key stakeholders in the Division. The following is a list of our key stakeholders:

MPO/RPO

Greensboro Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (GUAMPO)
Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Municipal Planning Organization (DCHC-MPO)
High Point Metropolitan Planning Organization (HPMPO)
Burlington Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO)
Piedmont Triad Rural Planning Organization (PTRPO)
Triangle Area Rural Planning Organization (TARPO)

Airports

Rockingham County Shiloh Airport
Burlington Alamance Regional Airport
Piedmont Triad International Airport

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Public Transit/Rail

HiTran
Greensboro Transit Authority
Chapel Hill Transit
Triangle Transit
Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART)
Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA)
Norfolk Southern
CSX

County Government

Rockingham County
Guilford County
Alamance County
Orange County
Caswell County

Municipal Government (Incorporated)

Eden
Madison
Mayodan
Reidsville
Wentworth
Gibsonville
Greensboro
High Point
Jamestown
Oak Ridge
Pleasant Garden
Sedalia
Stokesdale
Summerfield
Whitsett
Milton
Yanceyville
Alamance
Burlington
Elon
Graham
Green Level

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Haw River
Mebane
Ossipee
Swepsonville
Carrboro
Chapel Hill
Hillsborough

NCDOT Divisions

Aviation Division
Bicycle & Pedestrian Division
Division of Public Transportation
Transportation Planning Branch
Rail Division

DRAFT